

Deer Run Farms, L.L.C.
282 South Country Rd.
Brookhaven, NY 11719
(631) 286-7299

Hello. My name is Robert Nolan and I'm a 4th generation vegetable farmer from Long Island, New York. My 30 acre farm is located in the hamlet of Brookhaven in Suffolk County. My great grandfather started our farming business in the early 1900's in Middle Village, Queens. As land was bought for housing because of the increasing population, we moved east on Long Island 3 more times, to Valley Stream, Bethpage and finally the hamlet of Brookhaven. We have been on this current farm for 53 years. I took over farming operations from my uncle in 2001. I grow many different varieties of lettuce, spinach and cabbage. Much of this is shipped to the Hunts Point Market in New York City. I also have a road stand where we direct market our products. I have about 15 employees at the height of the season. My wife, son and daughter are all involved in the farm operation. So it's a family affair.

I'd like to tell you the story of farming on Long Island. Basically, we are farming in the suburbs. We have housing developments surrounding many farms. Complaints from neighbors about dust, noise, and odors are all too common. Our cost of production is very high. Land taxes, energy, labor and transportation costs are just a few of our problems. We also need a strong legal workforce to help us in our industry. We need a high return on our products to stay in business. It's a matter of economics. If we can't recoup our costs of production and make a little profit, we can no longer continue to farm.

We are in a highly competitive business and we welcome the competition. However, some of our current trade agreements are a problem. Free trade is not necessarily fair trade. With Canadian farmers being subsidized by their government, they can ship their products down into the Hunts Point Market in high volumes which depress the price. Often, as a result, our products get sold for cost or less. This has driven many small family farmers out of business because they can't compete against the bigger Agricultural companies. This has been a huge problem and needs to be fixed. I think there should be some congressional oversight of these trade agreements to see what impact they have on the farm economy.

I'd like to talk about some of the conservation programs now. The Conservation Security Program is a great idea and every farmer should have an opportunity to participate. However, on Long Island, many farms do not qualify for the program because of our soil index rating. Our intensive type farming, like plowing and disking, prohibit us from participating. I think this rating should be changed to allow the farmers on Long Island to participate.

I would like to see more funding in the next farm bill to go towards the EQIP program. Many of us here on Long Island have participated in the program and have found it to be very helpful. I personally, have constructed buffer zones along a river and

have used other practices to reduce erosion. There are many more farmers on Long Island who would love to participate and enjoy the benefits of the program but can't because there is not enough funding available.

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program is another program that Long Island Farmers would love to participate in. Suffolk County had the first purchase of development rights program in the country that was started in the 1970's. As of today, we have preserved 15,000 of the remaining 34,000 acres of farmland on Long Island and we continue to participate in state, county and town farmland preservation programs. However, the restrictions in the easements on the federal level make it almost impossible for any farmer on Long Island to participate. We need to be able to diversify our farming operations as we see fit in the ever changing agricultural picture. Many of us don't want to be restricted in what we need to do to make farming work here on Long Island. I think the supplying of grants to state governments for the purchase of development rights would be a more efficient means of utilizing this program.

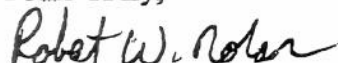
We also need a better crop insurance program. Many of the crops that are grown here on Long Island such as potatoes, vegetables and fruit, are not eligible for crop insurance programs. And those of us that qualify can't afford the high premiums. We are not interested in subsidy programs and government handouts here on Long Island. A good crop insurance program would eliminate the need for disaster programs and low interest loans.

Another area that should be adequately funded in the next farm bill is agricultural research. With the pesticide Aldicarb being discovered in the ground water in the early 1980's here on Long Island, we have seen the need to search for safer crop protectants in order to protect our drinking water. Continued research at Cornell University and research labs around the state is a vital part of our agricultural industry. We have been good stewards of the land and will continue in our efforts to strive for the most efficient means to produce crops.

With over 30 percent of our food being imported from other countries, it is my concern that this may become a security issue some day. That's why I think it is important to keep agriculture in this country strong, so we can be self sufficient. Having said that, with 8 states receiving over 90 percent of the farm bill money, I think it is imperative that the share the northeastern states receive be increased. I think that it is only fair and it will help equalize the agricultural industry in this country.

I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing. On behalf of all of the farmers on Long Island, we thank you for your time and concern on these very important issues. It is my hope that the next farm bill will strengthen agriculture so it can remain a viable industry in this country.

Yours Truly,



Robert W. Nolan

Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Information Required From Non-governmental Witnesses

House rules require non-governmental witnesses to provide their resume or biographical sketch prior to testifying. If you do not have a resume or biographical sketch available, please complete this form.

1. Name: Robert W. Nolan
2. Business Address: 282 South Country Road
Brookhaven, NY 11719
3. Business Phone Number: 631-286-7299
4. Organization you represent: Deer Run Farms, LLC
5. Please list any occupational, employment, or work-related experience you have which add to your qualification to provide testimony before the Committee:
President Long Island Farm Bureau
6. Please list any special training, education, or professional experience you have which add to your qualifications to provide testimony before the Committee:
2 year agriculture degree from SUNY Farmingdale
7. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list the capacity in which you are representing that organization, including any offices or elected positions you hold:

PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM OR YOUR BIOGRAPHY TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.

Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Required Witness Disclosure Form

House Rules* require nongovernmental witnesses to disclose the amount and source of Federal grants received since October 1, 2004.

Name: Robert W. Nolan
Address: 282 South Country Road, Brookhaven, NY 11791
Telephone: 631-286-7299
Organization you represent (if any): _____

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract. House Rules do **NOT** require disclosure of federal payments to individuals, such as Social Security or Medicare benefits, farm program payments, or assistance to agricultural producers:

Source: N/A Amount: _____
Source: N/A Amount: _____

2. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) the organization has received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract:

Source: N/A Amount: _____
Source: N/A Amount: _____

Please check here if this form is NOT applicable to you: ☒

Signature: Robert W. Nolan

* Rule XI, clause 2(g)(4) of the U.S. House of Representatives provides: *Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof. In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by any entity represented by the witness.*

PLEASE ATTACH DISCLOSURE FORM TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.